

DILLWORTH  
Robinson Place  
Huntsville, Ala. (2 miles N. of)  
Madison Co.

(See Major: Domestic Arch., plate 146)

ALA  
HABS No. 16-411  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

District No. 16

Historic American Buildings Survey  
E. Walter Burkhardt, District Officer  
Ala. Polytechnic Inst., Auburn, Ala.

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THE ROBINSON - DILWORTH HOME. NORTH OF  
Meridian Pike, one and one half mile from  
Huntsville, Madison County, Alabama.

**Ownership:**

Present Owner: W. P. Dilworth. From 1919 to present time.

Previous Owners: It is not definitely known to whom to give the credit for the building of this house. John W. Walker was the first owner of the site upon which house is situated. He bought a little more than 159 acres from the Government by a certificate of purchase in 1809.

Shortly after 1816, John F. Newman gained possession of the estate as the result of a bond he held which had been executed by Walker. He may have started the house.

William Fleming bought the estate in 1829, for \$4,000.

Lemuel Mead purchased the estate in 1830, and held it for 14 years.

John Robinson bought the property in 1844, paying \$3,474.

After John Robinson's death, his son John mortgaged the home to Mary L. Windham.

Upon default of the mortgage, "The property was put up at auction and sold to Harvey G. Fariss in 1898 for \$4,423.08." Shortly after purchase, Fariss deeded property back to Mary L. Windham. House was vacant during this time. Mrs. Alberta G. Taylor bought house in 1900. Mrs. Taylor sold house the next year, 1901, to Mrs. Elizabeth G. Newman.

W. P. Dilworth bought the home from the husband of Mrs. Newman in 1919. The Dilworths live in the home at the present time.

Date of Erection: 1840.  
Architect: Unknown.  
Builder: Unknown.  
Present Condition: Good, recently restored.  
Number of Stories: Two, wings one story.  
Materials of Construction: Brick, columns stucco on brick, wood trim, stucco lentils.

Other Existing Records: An article appeared in The Birmingham News, June 24, 1934. "Alabama Possessor of Rich Heritage." by E. Walter Burkhardt.

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Additional Data:

It is said that John Robinson may have built the house in 1844, when he purchased the estate. The old deeds speak of it as "The Newman Estate", or the estate on which Fleming lately and Newman formerly lived. It looks from this as if Newman had started the house.

John Robinson was a very <sup>large</sup> land-owner. To this estate he purchased he added many additional tracts of land. A winding drive led up to the large house surrounded by its beautiful lawns and flower gardens. A border of boxwood, with holly trees and oaks edged the drive. With his wife, Caroline L. Otey, he kept open house, as a result the house was the scene of much merriment and gaiety until the outbreak of the Civil War. Then the men of the family went to war and the women took refuge in South Alabama.

During the Civil War the house was used as officers quarters by the Union army. Barracks for the troops were built in a field across the road. The ruins of these barracks may be seen today.

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Additional Data: cont'd.

When the Spanish-American War came on, the grounds around the home were selected as a camping site. Row upon row of tents appeared about the lawn and in surrounding fields. The residence itself was used as a hospital for the camp. At the time the Dilworths moved into the residence, they found still standing the light partitions which had been used to divide the large rooms into small private quarters for individual beds.

When the Dilworth's purchased the property the house had been vacant for years. Some of its rooms were filled with hay, others had lumber and trash piled in them. One or two had become the hatching place for progressive and independent setting hens. They immediately began repairs, but took every effort to preserve as much of the original home as possible. They found both brick and the mortar between them in sound condition. Cleaning, painting and a little carpenter work did the job.

Source of Material: Historic Homes, by Pat Jones, published in the Huntsville Times. Nov. 13, 1932.

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Date:

7-9-1936.

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